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BULLETIN

OF

THE PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM

OCTOBER, 1906

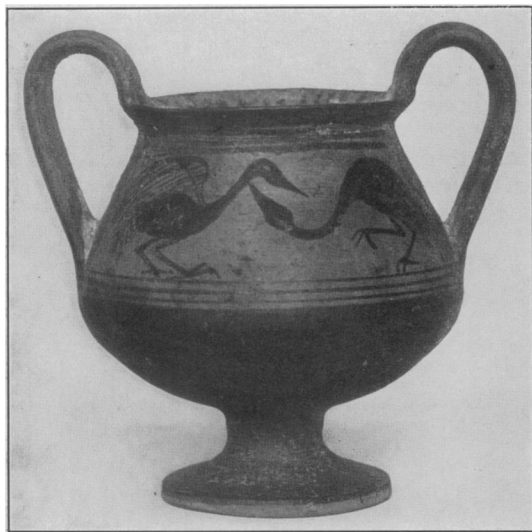
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GREEK AND ITALIAN POTTERY

There have been for some time in the possession of the Museum three groups of Greek and Italian vases, known as the Vaux, Lamborn, and Lewis collections. With the exception of a very few pieces, these collections, comprising about seven hundred examples, were purchased in Italy. They have recently

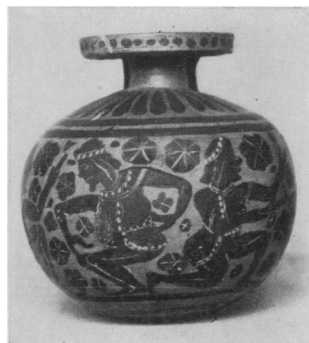
been combined and entirely rearranged. Duplicates and poor specimens have been retired and every vase has been subjected to tests to establish its genuineness. Fortunately, not a single absolute forgery has been discovered, although several pieces—among them two red-figured *kylikes*—were found to have been repaired and re-painted. The best of these vases, now relabelled



1. CYPRIOTE CUP

and chronologically installed, form a good and representative collection of ancient ceramic art. To describe the entire collection is impossible here. Only a brief description of some of the finer pieces is attempted.

One of the oldest pieces in the collection is



2. ARYBALLOS
Corinthian Style

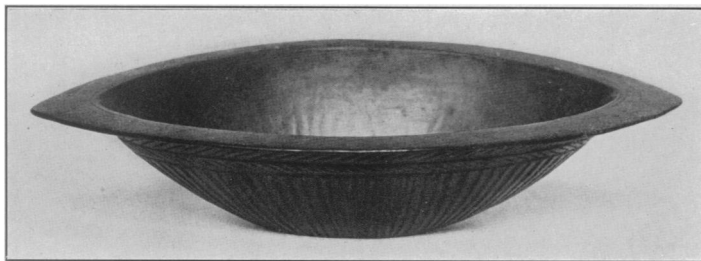
the Cypriote cup shown in Fig. 1, which must be assigned to a period following close upon the Mycenaean epoch. This great and flourishing civilization came to an end somewhere about 1200 B. C., but in Cyprus a civilization closely akin to the Mycenaean culture lived on until as late as 800 B. C. The vases manu-



3. SOUTH ITALIAN POTTERY

factured in Cyprus during this late period repeat the decorative motives—notably birds, horses, and human figures—which characterize the latest efforts of Mycenaean art. Thus the cup illustrated in Fig. 1, which is typical of this period, is reminiscent of Mycenaean vases. Of later Cypriote vases, also, manufactured during the "Graeco-Phoenician" period (800-400 B. C.), the collection contains many good examples.

Representative of the ware made during the seventh and early sixth centuries, when Corinth was the most flourishing centre of vase manufacture, is the little aryballos or oil-flask shown in Fig. 2. Since it was purchased in



4. BUCCHERO WARE

Rome, it is probably to be regarded as of South Italian, rather than Corinthian, manufacture, for it is well-known that when the Corinthians founded the colony of Syracuse in 735 B. C., they took with them to Italian shores the Corinthian style of vase-painting. Characteristic of this style is the abundance of "ground-ornaments" and the use of purple paint and incised lines, all of which may be observed on the flask shown in Fig. 2. The method of grouping figures which is employed on this vase is also characteristic of the Corinthian style.

In Fig. 3 are shown two examples of a South Italian ware which is somewhat later but which yet shows traces of the Corinthian style in its use of purple paint. The lower of these two vases is of the shape sometimes called "Kothon." It may possibly have served as a support for a round-bottomed vase. Its lip is

too thick and rounded to admit the possibility of its having been used for a drinking cup. The handle, which consists of a strip of clay bent into a loop with two ends and pressed against the body of the vase, is characteristic of this period of South Italian pottery.

The next in chronological order of the wares represented in the collection is the so-called Bucchero ware—the native pottery of the Etruscans. It is made of a clay which is black throughout and is generally highly polished. This ware is well represented, for we have in addition to the typical oinochoes (wine-jugs) and drinking cups, such



5. ATTIC KYATHOS
Black-Figured Style

exquisitely fashioned vases as the boat-shaped piece shown in Fig. 4, the clay of which is as thin as that of the lightest modern tea-cup. In using this thin clay it is evident that the potter attempted to imitate the more costly products of the metal-worker's art. The oinochoes of the collection show the same intent, for not only are their decorations stamped in with moulds, after the manner of metal vases, but they also carry on their handles large knobs of clay to imitate the rivets with which the handles of metal vases are fastened on.

Of Attic vases in the black-figured style, the collection contains a number of fine specimens, most of them



6. ATTIC STAMNOS
Red-Figured Style



7. WHITE LEKYTHOS

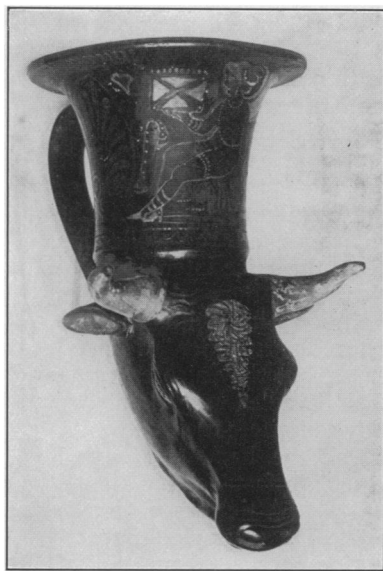
either group of figures. The habit of inscribing Greek vases is an old and well-known one, but this particular inscription is certainly rare and is quite likely to prove to be unique. It makes this vase therefore a very important and valuable one.

Of the beautiful white lekythoi (oil-jugs) which were made at Athens during the fifth century, the collection contains two specimens (see Fig. 7). As usual on this class of vases, used exclusively for offerings to the dead, the decoration consists of a scene at the grave. To the right appears a stele hung with dedicated sashes. To the left stands a draped woman extending in her hand the saucer from which she is about to make her libation. The delicacy with which the profile and hair of the figure are executed suggests the great works of Greek art.

A very large proportion of the collection is made up of Apulian vases of the fourth and third centuries B. C. In artistic merit these vases fall far below the products of Attic art. A dearth of artistic inspiration results in the constant repetition of the

amphorae (two-handled jars) painted with scenes of Dionysiac revels. Among the finest of this style is the cup shown in Fig. 5, decorated with two large eyes and two sphinxes. The faces of the sphinxes are painted white according to the established convention of rendering the flesh of women.

The most interesting and valuable piece in the collection is the red-figured Attic stamnos (Fig. 6) which was once in the possession of Joseph Bonaparte. It is an excellent example of the early severe style (520-500 B. C.) of red-figured vase-painting. The subject of the decoration on the side of the vase shown in the cut is the familiar one of Herakles' struggle with the Nemean lion. The hero is represented in a crouching position. With one hand he seizes the lion's jaw; with the other he encircles his neck in the effort to strangle him. The center of the composition is filled with a tree, from the branches of which hang the hero's quiver. Behind him, as usual, rests his club. On the reverse side of the jar is painted Theseus' struggle with the Marathonian bull. Delightful as are these lively scenes, so simply and truthfully depicted, the chief interest of this vase does not lie in its decoration but in an inscription, "You are beautiful," which is written backward above



8. APULIAN RHYTON

same subjects for decoration. Thus the scene painted on the upper part of the rhyton (drinking-horn) represented in Fig. 8 recurs on the great majority of Apulian vases. It is commonly interpreted as a toilet scene. In typical cases a seated woman holds in her hand her jewel-box, or takes from it an ornament.



9. APULIAN KRATER

ures, carelessly executed. The scene shown in the cut is appropriate to the use of the vase. Evidently offerings are being made to the dead. A little to the left of the center is the altar, towards which one man is advancing with a lamb, while near it a second stands ready with a knife and pitcher for the libation. From the extreme right a woman advances, bringing a basket of offerings. The costumes of the men are those usually thought to be Peucetian. An interesting trick of the trade by which Apulian vases may always be recognized is the method of indicating the surface of the ground by lines of white dots.

The collection contains many good examples of a later Apulian style, in which festoons and wreaths of flowers or grapes supersede the use of human figures for decoration. The shapes of these vases are sometimes good, but in general they compare unfavorably, as do all Apulian vases, with the finely finished products of Greek ceramic art.

In this instance the figure of Eros, a frequent subject in Apulian art, is substituted for that of the woman. The figure of a man is often added on the left and then the scene is called a "court-ing scene" or the "exchange of gifts." The South Italian potters were not wanting in skill, however. The modeling of the bull's head which constitutes the lower part of this rhyton is both lively and delicate.

Fig. 9 represents one of the large cinerary urns which were manufactured in South Italy during the fourth century B. C. The decoration is almost entirely confined to the side shown in the cut, for the reason that in a tomb only one side of the vase would be visible. On the reverse are three draped fig-

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